

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

- 1 1. A computer system comprising:
 - 2 a protected storage device including a first password stored therein;
 - 3 a BIOS, separate from the protected storage device, including instructions
 - 4 to authenticate a user and to release the first password from the
 - 5 protected storage device if the user is authenticated; and
 - 6 a hard drive to receive the first password from the protected storage
 - 7 device and, in response, to permit an operating system (OS) stored
 - 8 thereon to be loaded.
- 1 2. The computer system of claim 1, wherein the protected storage device is
- 2 soldered to a circuit board of the system.
- 1 3. The computer system of claim 2, wherein the protected storage device is part
- 2 of a chipset of the system.
- 1 4. The computer system of claim 1, wherein the protected storage device is
- 2 contained on a removable smart card.
- 1 5. The computer system of claim 1, wherein the instructions are to authenticate
- 2 the user by a method including verifying a second password, the second
- 3 password being determinable by the user.

- 1 6. The computer system of claim 5, wherein the instructions are to authenticate
2 the user by a method including verifying a fingerprint of the user.
- 1 7. The computer system of claim 5, wherein the instructions are to authenticate
2 the user by a method including verifying that the user possesses a token.
- 1 8. The computer system of claim 1, wherein the instructions are to authenticate
2 the user by a method including verifying a fingerprint of the user.
- 1 9. The computer system of claim 1, wherein the instructions are to authenticate
2 the user by a method including verifying that the user possesses a token.
- 1 10. A computer system comprising:
2 a protected storage device including a first password stored therein;
3 a hard drive to receive the first password from the protected storage
4 device and, in response, to unlock the drive;
5 a voltage supply; and
6 a power manager to cause the voltage supply to reduce a voltage to the
7 drive, thereby locking the drive, the power manager to subsequently
8 cause the voltage supply to increase the voltage to the drive, the drive
9 remaining locked until the first password is received.

- 1 11. The computer system of claim 10, wherein the protected storage device is
2 soldered to a circuit board of the system.
- 1 12. The computer system of claim 10, wherein the protected storage device is
2 part of a chipset of the system.
- 1 13. The computer system of claim 10, further comprising a set of instructions to
2 authenticate a user of the computer system and to transfer the first password
3 from the protected storage device to the drive if the user is authenticated.
- 1 14. The computer system of claim 13, wherein the user is located remotely from
2 the computer system.
- 1 15. The computer system of claim 14, wherein the instructions are to authenticate
2 the user by a method including verifying a second password.
- 1 16. A method comprising:
2 enabling a user to be authenticated to a computer system using a first
3 method of authentication; and
4 enabling the first password to be transferred from a protected storage
5 device to a hard drive of the computer system, if the user is
6 authenticated, to unlock the drive.

1 17. The method of claim 16, further comprising enabling an operating system
2 stored on the drive to be loaded after the drive is unlocked.

1 18. The method of claim 16, further comprising enabling a power manager to
2 relock the drive by causing a voltage supplied to the drive to be reduced.

1 19. A computer system programmed to implement the method of claim 16.
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1 20. A machine-readable medium including machine-readable instructions that, if
2 executed by a machine, cause the machine to perform the method of claim
3 16.

1 21. The medium of claim 20, further comprising machine-readable instructions
2 that, if executed by the machine, cause the machine to further load an
3 operating system stored on the drive after the drive is unlocked.